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WASTE-BASKET OF WORDS.

BUTTERMUNK. — Bittern. South Berwick, Me. "Moäst loike a butter-bump." Tennyson, "Northern Farmer." — *W. A. Hayes, Cambridge, Mass.*

COAST (see No. 1, p. 78). — The word was common in my boyhood, — passed in Wayne and neighboring counties of New York State, — though the sense was usually the riding over fences, etc., upon the hard crust formed upon the surface of snow. "Sliding down hill" was the term assigned to riding in or upon the highway. No one taught us the distinctions, yet they were generally observed. The people were second and third generations from New England. — *A. S. Roe, Worcester, Mass.* — The word appears to have been a local term of the neighborhood of Boston. — *W. W. Newell.* — In Canada (Toronto) *slide* or *ride* is said to be the common term, though *coast* is sometimes heard. — *A. F. Chamberlain, Toronto.*

DIDDLEDEES. — This seems a curious instance of a strictly local word. At Hyannis, in my boyhood, it was the universal name for the fallen pine-needles that carpet the ground in the woods. They were gathered by the cart-load, and largely used for kindlings. I never heard the word outside the village, and persons in adjacent towns did not know what it meant. — *Sylvester Baxter, Boston, Mass.*

DREEN (see No. 1, p. 78). — To this day, in Wayne County, N. Y., this form is more common than *drain*, both as noun and verb. — *A. S. Roe.*

GAS. — This word, considered as slang, has not been accepted by lexicographers. In the United States it is much used in the sense of idle talk, windy eloquence, — a signification influenced by a supposed derivation from *gas*, air; as we say *gas-bag*. But an older meaning of our word is *boast*, or *brag*. "That is all *gas*," it's nothing but bombast; a *gassy* man, one who boasts of his prowess; "none of your *gassing*," none of your nonsense. In England the use is more idiomatic. Holten, in his "Slang Dictionary," London, 1874, has: "GAS, to give off superfluous conceit, to bounce or brag; 'his game is GAS.' To give a person GAS is to scold him or give him a good beating; synonymous with 'to give him Jessie.'" The word doubtless comes from the mediæval French *gab*, *gas*, mockery, raillery. "Ce n'est pas *gas*," it is not a joke. It is also used in the sense of insult or derision: to say *gas* to any one; "children will give you *gas*," will mock you, as a blind man in the street (Godefroi, Dict.). Hence the English word, which has nothing to do with *gas*, an aeriform fluid, a word made up by Von Helmont in the seventeenth century. — *W. W. Newell.*

TO-NOON. — In my boyhood, at Hyannis, Cape Cod, it was common to say *to-noon* in the same sense in which *to-night* is used. For instance, "Where are you going *to-noon*?" I remember the astonishment expressed by some friends from Boston at my using it, and that was the first time I learned that the word was not as correct as *to-night*. That was in 1865 or 1866, and I do not know whether the expression is still in use in that part of the world. — *Sylvester Baxter.*